G. R S. IX-5]

*Previous references.*

248 16

*Later references.*

191 .

( 1912 )

288

**Serial Nos.**

# GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

---

*Serial Nos.* This papers

**Part B for**

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SUBJECT.

Mr C. V. Krishnaji Rao's representation against the orders of the Sr. Raghavendra Swami relative to communication

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Correspondence between Residency & the Dewan

W D 88—GPB—50,000—24 7-16

R. S. III—1] 1918. 69

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

( Mun )

NOTES.

File No. 288 18-19

FILE HEADING.

Mr. C-V Deshagin Nair Representation against the Order of the Hon'ble Mr. Raghavendrachariar re his Excommunication due to his foreign travel

From

| No. | Dated | Received |
|---|---|---|

| Diary No. | Enclos. | Spare Copies. | Serial No. |
|---|---|---|---|

BRIEF ABSTRACT OF LETTER.

NOTES AND ORDERS.

NOTES—First Sheet.

WD 1232—GPB—20,000—18 11 16

gent

WP 248—GPB—2,000—2-8-18

V

REPLY

(*To be written on this margin.*)

# Office of the Dewan of Mysore.

NOTE.

*Dated* 9th November 1918.

Demi-official letter No. 7614 dated the 7th November 1918 from the Hon'ble Mr. H.V.Cobb, in the matter of Mr. C.V Seshagir Rao's representation against the orders of the Swamigalu of the Sri Raghavendra Swami Mutt.

****

Forwarded to the Joint Secretary, Kazrai Department, for favour of a note on all the aspects of the case. I should like also to know why a reply was not asked for, from the Swamigalu ~~in reply~~ to our reference to him dated the 30th June 1917.

The note may kindly be sent up - - through the Extra Member o Council.

The matter should be treated as urgent.

9/11/18

814

18 19

Memo

288-18

The Joint Secretary,

Kazrai Department.

A note is submitted.

There has been a small delay owing to the absence on leave of the Hon'ble Member in charge

1743-74

19-11-18

Extra Member and P.T.O. 19/11

G. R. S. III-2)

General and Revenue Secretariat.

MWZ File No. 288 of 1918

Serial No.

Gen.

The Mr Price's note is sufficiently exhaustive of this matter & can add very little to his advantage. These are pre-eminently matters adjustment of which can be left to the mellowing influences of time.

Put.
20 11 18

Submit to Dewan
Sir
21 11.

2689
21.11.18

Seen.

I shall be glad if a draft reply to the Residency is put up for submission to His Highness for approval. -Early.

23/11/18 AC

Draft Submitted. A clean copy of the note is prepared. Sd
21.11.

2864
25.11.18

Dewan.

Submit to H.H. the

Sir

2047-31
2 12 18

Gen. I think it will do

Put
3 12 18.

NOTE—Contn. sheet.

G. R. S. III-2)

General and Revenue Secretariat.

Mis. File No. 288 of 1918.

| Serial No. | |
|---|---|
| | Subd Odeenary |
| | 3-12-01 |

NOTE—Contn. sheet.

# Submitted to His Highness.

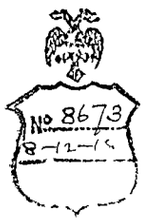
I submit for favour of approval, the draft of a reply to the Hon'ble the Resident, with reference to a demi-official communication from him, on the complaint of one Mr. C.V. Sheshagiri Rao, Clerk, Aden Field Force, against the decision of the Swamigaloo of Sri Raghavendraswami Matt at Nanjangud in regard to ceremonial matters.

M. Viswanath

8th Dec 1918

Record of Cases submitted for the Orders of His Highness the Maharaja.

## *Subject.*




Draft reply to the Hon'ble the Resident regarding the complaint of one Mr. C.V.Sheshagiri Rao against the decision of the Swamigaloo of Sri Raghavendraswami Matt at Nanjangud on certain ceremonial matters.

638

## *Order.*

~~K R W~~

11/12/18

Subd & 2nd in order.

3331-316
14-12-18

The draft approved by the late Dewan may issue

14.12

Issued. Vide DO No 6223

R 5708

D.C. No. 7614
Encls. 8

THE RESIDENCY,
BANGALORE.
7th November 1918

Dear Sir M. Visvesvaraya,

Would you kindly refer to Major Tucker's official letter to you No. 7217 dated the 13th October 1916, forwarding for favour of disposal a petition from one C. V. Seshagiri Rao.

You will no doubt recollect that at or about that date and again subsequently on the 16th March 1917, I discussed personally with you the somewhat delicate questions involved and - as my note recorded that day shows - you were kind enough on the latter occasion to say that you would write and let me know what had or could be done in the matter. Since then and until the close of last month I received no further communication on the subject. On the 25th October, however, a letter reached me from the Officer Commanding, "A" Supply Depot Company at Poona, a copy of which together with its enclosures in original (to be kindly returned) I am now forwarding to you.

2. I know nothing about the status of the Guru of the Mutt concerned or whether the community subject to his spiritual jurisdiction is of any size or importance. If, however, he has a large following, embracing others besides the Petitioner, who belong to the Indian army, it would appear that his somewhat antiquated and conservative ruling is likely to cause hardship as in the case now under consideration. Would you kindly let me know if in the - interests of those concerned, who obviously must obey the orders of their Military Superiors, whether you have found it possible to move in the matter and, if so, whether any suitable compromise can be or has been arrived at.

Yours sincerely,
H. V. Cobb.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya, K.C.I.E.,
Dewan of Mysore.

BJ MA.

THE RESIDENCY
BANGALORE

4

Letter No. Estt/289/3, dated the 22nd October 1918, from the Officer Commanding, "A" Supply Depot Company, Poona, to the First Assistant to the Hon'ble the Resident in Mysore, Bangalore.

---:O:---

In forwarding the marginally noted correspondence I have the honour to inform you that the Order of His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal's Mutt, Nanjangud, Mysore District, communicated to Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao, Supply and Transport Corps, Wellington, vide enclosures "E" and "F" does not appear to be satisfactory. As in the present war, people of all castes and creeds are obliged to undertake sea voyages, and if such restrictions are to be placed on them, if they have to carry out the Orders of Government, it will assuredly cause great discontent and hardship and would also tend to retard recruitment to a greater extent. Further Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao is now serving at Aden as he has been transferred there. Under these circumstances I would request that you will kindly arrange to place the matter before His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore with a view to the grievances expressed by Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao being speedily redressed.

1. Application D/ 27-2-1918 / 13-3-1918 from Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao, Wellington, forwarded by the Officer i/c Supply Depot, Wellington, with his recommendation. Enclosure "A."
2. My No.2071 dated 26-4-18 to His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Mutt. Enclosure "B."
3. Letter dated Camp Nanjangud 1-5-1918 from the Agent, His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Mutt. Enclosure "C."
4. Application D/ 15-5-1918 from Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao, Wellington, forwarded by the Officer i/c Supply Depot, Wellington, under his No.P/567 dated 16-5-1918. Enclosure "D."
5. The order of His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Mutt in vernacular. Enclosure "E."
6. English translation for enclosure "E."
7. Application dated 10-9-18 from Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao, Aden, received from the A.D.S.T. of Aden Field Force under No.R.D./7832 dated 10-9-18.

I request that the enclosures may be kindly returned when done with.

---:O:---

"C O P Y"

REGISTRAR.

D. O. No. 6090

Bangalore
9th November 18

Dear Mr Cobb,

I am in receipt of your Offcial letter No. 7614 dated the 7th instant, on the matter of Mr C. V. Sheshagiri Rao's representation against the orders of His Holiness the Guru of the Sri Raghavendra Swami Mutt Mantralaya—

I find from the records that a reference was made to the Govt on the subject on the 30 June 1917 and that no reply has been received

~~I enclose for your perusal a copy of this reference together with an English translation of it.~~

~~I am afraid the matter cannot be expedited~~ I will write again in due course — after further enquiries into the matter

Yours Sincerely

do

9/11/18 D C Wallace

N O T E.

---

Subject:-- Complaint of Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao of harsh treatment by the Swamy of Sri Raghavendra Swami Matt at Nanjangud.

---

Mr. Seshagiri Rao is admittedly a disciple of the Matt employed as a clerk in the Commissariat and was compelled to undertake foreign travel on field duty during the war. He seems to have returned to Wellington sometime in 1916 and found himself handicapped, when he wished to perform, as usual, the annual ceremony of his parents, the local Matt Agent considering him to have lost by his foreign travel the standard of ceremonial purity required for the purpose. Since then Mr. Seshagiri Rao has been agitating to be restored to his original position and a representation of his received ~~th~~ through the Residency was forwarded to the Swami for favourable consideration and disposal with a covering communication dated 30th June 1917.

2. Mr. Seshagiri Rao's position is no doubt unfortunate and calls for sympathy from all enlightened persons, but the line of action taken by him does

not appear to be well advised. It has to be remembered that the Matadhipatis themselves are not free agents in a matter of the kind unless it is possible for all the religious heads to act together, and promulgate a new order of things, an event devoutly to be wished but in the present condition of things almost impossible to bring about. There is no doubt that there are a number of texts in the Dharmasastras and Puranas prohibiting foreign travel and no assembly of impartial Pandits relying upon old authoritative texts can afford to ignore them. I may instance here the result of the Parishads held at Tiruvadi and Conjiveram some years ago with the express purpose of tackling this question but with abortive results, as the forces of orthodoxy and arguments based upon authoritative texts were much too strong. It is probably true that the prohibition was a later growth and the older social rules were not so narrow; yet the existence of such prohibition in books which are now recognized as authoritative for all purposes is a stumbling block in the way of more liberal opinions.

3. I have had talks on the subject with some of the leading Pandits of the various Matts and their position does not seem to be one of opposition but more of helplessness. They quite realize that

foreign travel has come to stay and that with advance of time more and more of our young men will be going to Western Countries with the concomitant result that the leaven of the so-called social taint will spread more and more until it covers both the Vaidiks and Lowkiks together. They are prepared to recognize that it would be much better in the interest of Hindu religion and of the foreign travelled people themselves, to formulate a set of purificatory ceremonies which while not prohibitive in expense or involving too much trouble, will serve the purpose of restoring them back again to their place in the Hindu fold. Even now it is an open secret that a very large proportion of Vaidiks do participate in ceremonial functions at such houses, perhaps surreptitiously and except very occasionally no disciplinary action is taken against them. As regards Lowkikas it is a common practice for them to interdine with foreign travelled men and no questions are asked, the Matadhipatis and their agents choosing wisely to take no notice of such happenings. It is only a question of time before other forms of commingling such as intermarriage, of which there are already stray instances, are freely resorted to. If only one of our leading Mathas--say that of Sringeri-- will boldly come forward and give a lead, the other Matts

will fall into line and the question will have been solved. It must not be merely one of text torturing but an honest recognition of changed times and necessities of the country and a conscious departure from established usage. This is perhaps too much to hope for and in the meanwhile we have only to depend upon time and the good sense of Indian society to evolve a solution.

4. In thus leaving matters for the adjustment of time, one might even say that the procedure is not inconsistent with the genius of Hindu religion. The Dharmasastras have always recognized local custom as a potent factor in settling social observances e.g., the recognition given to the marriage of first cousins in South India. The right to make a valid custom still continues and at some point when probably the majority of a community have chosen to be guided by a particular course of action, the conduct will have become obedience to a recognized custom, authoritative texts to the contrary notwithstanding. In this connection, it may be pointed out that precedents are not wanting when the organic vitality of the community has set right the cramping letter of law. For instance, the same text books that prohibited foreign travel had also placed portions of India itself out of bounds such as Bengal, Orissa, Guzerat, Sindh etc. and penances of various degrees of severity

were fixed for transgression. These have since fallen into desuetude. Even within the life of the present generation travel to and residence in Burma and Ceylon have come to be condoned.

5. Besides, the Prayaschittas which may be enjoined are likely to be so severe that hardly any person will be found willing to perform them, if it can at all be helped. In some of the books I looked into in this connection, mention is made of purificatory ceremonies, not indeed with the idea of restoring complete commensality but only as an expiation of sin and for restoration of Brahmanhood more or less of a secondary order rendering the performer fit to take part in the compulsory religious rites enjoined upon a Brahman but not extending to savyavahara. The ceremonies mentioned are Shadabdakrichram which consists of a gift of a number of cows ranging from 1850 to 3850 according to the object for which the foreign travel was undertaken or its conventional equivalent in money at 12 annas or 6 annas 3 pies per cow according to differing interpretations, (ii) Setusnanam, (iii) Punassamskaram and (iv) Mudradaranam in the case of Vaishnavas and Sri Vaishnavas. Surely these are of such a taxing nature that unless one is an enthusiastic believer in the real efficacy of such expiatory ceremonies, one is not likely to trouble one's self with the expense and worry of performing them.

6. The situation being what it is, it is for the Matadhipatis and their Pandit advisers to take action and give a lead to the community to whom they owe a duty as spiritual advisers and guardians of its culture and discipline and the ministrants of the form of religion they follow. Time was when the question of Samayachara Vichara was one of the functions and a very important one of the Hindu kings, but with the march of time this has fallen into desuetude and the function was so to say delegated to and discharged by the spiritual Heads of Communities including Matts, many of whom are liberally patronised and subsidised by the past and present sovereigns of the land. Looking at the question in this light, it would seem that the Government will be within their right to bring the situation prominently to the notice of these Religious Heads and ask them to take such action as the circumstances of the times and the interests of the country call for. It is possible that even this action on the part of Government may be misunderstood and resented in some quarters as an unwarranted interference. At the same time the Muzrai Superintendent may be instructed to meet during his tours the more influential Pandits belonging to the various sects and have informal talks on the subject with a view to create in them a sense of duty to the community and bring

home to them the injury they are doing to themselves by their supine attitude. Besides this, the Government may also decline to recognize any excommunication order passed by the Matadhipatis on a charge of foreign travel or communal intercourse with such people so far as the admission of such persons to Muzrai Institutions are concerned. Beyond this, it does not seem expedient for Government to go.

7. As regards the case in point, viz. the complaint of Mr. C. V. Seshagiri Rao, it would seem that nothing further can be done. The Swamy has given his opinion and it cannot be said to be perverse though the texts depended upon are antiquated and perhaps interpreted illiberall The form of Prayaschitta has not been indicated but information on this point be obtained by him from the Matt. Chataka Sradha is a form of ceremony in vogue among the Vaishnavas when competent Brahmans cannot be found to officiate and is not in itself to be condemned though Mr. Seshagiri Rao may not enjoy the full privilege of dining with the Brahmans ~~xxx~~ assembled. Besides, Sri Raghavendraswami Matt is one of the three leading Matts of the Vaishnavas and has a large following of influential disciples both in and outside the State. It seems inexpedient for Government to take any action which will possibly be construed as an undue interference

interference in the Matt's disciplinary dealings with its disciples. In these circumstances, the Hon'ble the Resident may be apprised of the situation and the inexpediency for Government to take any further action in the matter.

8. In the Dewan's order of 9th inst. I was further desired to explain why a reply was not asked for from the Swamigalu to the Secretariat communication dated 30th June 1917. I beg to state that Mr. Seshagiri Rao's representation was advisedly sent to the Swami for favourable consideration and disposal, as a matter concerning the Matt's dealings with its disciples but at the same time an indication of the line on which the Government will be pleased to see it settled was also made by way of moral persuasion. In the circumstances, it would have been inexpedient to call for a direct reply to the Government reference but in the Vignapana Patrika the Swami was informed that the Government would be glad to hear how the matter was disposed of. This was taken by the office to be a final disposal of the matter and the papers were accordingly recorded. Thus no reminders came to be issued to the Swamigalu calling for a reply.

Clean copy
Rb
V.M.C

V. Of. Varavaramudiengar

19th November 1918.

14

D.O.No. 6223/Eu 7 with a list

Bangalore,

12th December 1918.

My dear Mr. Cobb,

I write in continuation of my D.O. letter No.6090 dated 9th November, acknowledging our communication, regarding Mr.C.V.Seshagiri Rao, clerk den Field Force.

I have given the matter very careful consideration, and, I think, that Government can do very little to help the solution of this vexed question. It is mixed up with the Hindu conception of ceremonial purity and even Mutadhipatis are not free agents in the matter, as their opinions have to be in accordance with orthodox tradition and accepted authorities.

Mr.Seshagiri Rao's case is, no doubt, a hard one, but the question involved is such that his community alone can find a solution and it is difficult to see how a secular Government can possibly intervene. Interference in such matters is sure to be resented and it is best to leave the community to evolve a satisfactory solution, which is bound to come in the future or it

I may state for the information of the Government in question that of the three leading foundations

ministering to the spiritual needs of the Vaishnavas (Dwaita Vedantis) and has a large and influential following both in and outside Mysore.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon'ble

Mr. A.V.Cobb, C.S.I., C.I.E.,

Resident in Mysore.

8-12-18

The original papers received with your demi official letter No. 7614 dated 7th November 1918 are returned herewith, as desired.

Enclosures to domi-official letter No.6223 dated

12th December 1918.

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1. Application dated 27-2-1918 / 13-3-1918 from Mr. C.V.Seshagiri Rao, Wellington, forwarded by the Officer i/c Supply Depot, Wellington, with his recommendation. Enclosure "A"

2. No.2071 dated 26-4-18 from the Officer commanding A Supply Depot Company, Poona, to His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Mutt. .. Enclosure "B".

3. Letter dated Camp Nanjangud 1-5-1918 from the Agent, His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Mutt. Enclosure "C".

4. Application dated 15-5-1918 from Mr.C.V.Seshagiri Rao, Wellington, forwarded by the Officer i/c Supply Depot, Wellington, under his No.P/567 dated 16-5-1918. Enclosure "D"

5. The order of His Holiness Sri Raghavendra Swamigal Matt in vernacular. Enclosure "E".

6. English translation for enclosre "E". (marked F.)

7. Application dated 10-9-18 from Mr. C.V.Seshagiri Rao, Aden, received from the A.D.St. of Aden Field Force under No.R.D./7832 dated 10-9-18. (marked G.)